



Clean Energy Future Committee Meeting Minutes

Approved at the 05-28-2021 meeting

April 23, 2021

8:15 – 9:30 a.m.

Virtual Meeting – Hosted on Zoom

Members present: Jim DiTullio, Ken Pruitt, Dave Levy, Emily Sullivan, Dan Amstutz, Pasi Miettinen, Ryan Katofsky, Shelly Dein, Coralie Cooper

Also attending: Brucie Moulton, Gene Benson

Members not present: Adam Chapdelaine, Diane Mahon, Marc Breslow, Nellie Aikenhead

The meeting convened at 8:17 a.m.

Video Meeting Procedures

Mr. Pruitt read a set of prepared remarks explaining the procedures that the Committee would follow to hold a virtual meeting. Governor Baker signed an Executive Order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic allowing virtual meetings, which suspended the usual Open Meeting Law requirement that a quorum of committee members be physically present in order to hold an official committee meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Pruitt displayed the minutes from the March 26, 2021 Meeting. He asked the Committee to review the minutes. He noted he received comments from Mr. Amstutz prior to the meeting and showed those changes on screen. Mr. Katofsky motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Dein seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. The members unanimously approved the March 26, 2021 meeting minutes.

Agenda Item 1: Nominations and Election of Officers

Mr. Pruitt noted that the election of officers was first discussed in the March meeting. He said that at this meeting, we would nominate and vote for officers (a Chair and a Secretary). Mr. Pruitt first asked for a motion to accept nominations for the officers. Mr. Miettinen motioned, and Mr. Katofsky seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously approved the motion to accept nominations for officers.

Mr. Pruitt asked first for a nomination for a Minutes Secretary. There were no immediate nominations made by other Committee members, so Mr. Pruitt nominated David Levy for Secretary. Ms. Dein seconded the nomination. Mr. Pruitt asked for any other nominations for Secretary. Mr. Amstutz asked a procedural question about the term of each position. Mr. Pruitt suggested the initial terms would be for the remainder of 2021. Starting in 2022, each position would serve a full year term. The Committee agreed that the length of these terms would be appropriate. Mr. Levy stated that he would be willing to serve as Secretary.

The Committee unanimously approved the election of David Levy as Secretary.

Mr. Pruitt turned to the nomination of Committee Chair. Mr. Pruitt nominated Ms. Coralie Cooper to be Chair. Mr. Miettinen seconded the motion. Ms. Cooper accepted the nomination. Mr. Pruitt asked for other nominations. Ms. Cooper noted it would be an honor to be Committee Chair.

The Committee unanimously approved Ms. Cooper to be Chair of the Committee.

Mr. Pruitt and Ms. Cooper agreed that Mr. Pruitt would close out this April meeting as acting Chair.

Agenda Item 2: Town Meeting Update

Mr. Pruitt turned to the upcoming Town Meeting. He noted that Mr. Levy recorded a committee report about the CEFC, which focused on the Net Zero Action Plan. He said he would share the link to that video after the meeting.

Mr. Pruitt then turned to Warrant Article 38, titled "Zoning Bylaw Amendment/Energy Efficient Homes on Nonconforming Lots." Mr. Pruitt mentioned that a CEFC working group was leading efforts to promote this Article to Town Meeting Members. Mr. Miettinen updated the Committee on the discussions to date, describing the documents that have been created and the outreach at precinct meetings that has occurred.

Mr. Pruitt noted that given his understanding of the Town Meeting schedule, the Article may not come up for a vote for at least one if not two weeks. He said outreach and planning efforts to promote this warrant article were ongoing.

Ms. Cooper mentioned that the CEFC was also working with Mothers Out Front, getting volunteers to email Town Meeting Member precincts. Ms. Cooper said so far, some precincts were not covered by these emails but she hoped there would eventually be more complete outreach.

Mr. DiTullio thanked everyone who has volunteered to date to present at precinct meetings. He agreed it was likely that it would be at least two weeks before the article would come up for a vote. Mr. DiTullio noted his concern that this article could be "tied to" another Warrant Article that poses a moratorium on teardowns, and that Warrant

Article 38 could be portrayed as “pro-teardown.” He asked Committee members to monitor concern on the teardown moratorium article.

Ms. Dein noted she heard a presentation by Mr. Miettinen at one precinct meeting but said she has not heard much concern about teardowns there or elsewhere.

(Note Emily Sullivan had to leave at this point in the agenda, at 8:48 a.m.)

Mr. Katofsky said he presented at one meeting and attended another. He said he heard one concern about vacant lots being developed and another concern about size of homes. Mr. Katofsky acknowledged there is a small percentage of lots where a larger home could be developed but only if the home is highly energy-efficiency.

Mr. Gene Benson then thanked the CEFC for its efforts to date. He also noted the concerns he has heard about the number of teardowns and the potential for this to cause housing to become less affordable. He said he believed that criticism was inaccurate.

Mr. DiTullio noted he received two questions for Town residents. The first one was a concern that anyone who would remove and replace a foundation would likely be a developer, so that Warrant Article 38 would just be a tool to facilitate teardowns. He said the other comment was that a new foundation isn’t necessary to make a home energy efficient. Mr. DiTullio noted his preference was to keep the messaging at a “high level” to avoid getting bogged down in the minutiae – to emphasize this as being a key tool to help accomplish the Town’s climate goal. The measure is an essential part of the 2050 Net Zero Action Plan.

Mr. Levy made similar comments. Mr. Miettinen noted if someone wants to rebuild a house, they will do so whether they can rebuild the foundation or not. He also emphasized the equity argument. If 28% of building foundations can never be replaced but 72% can, what are homeowners on non-conforming lots supposed to do when their foundations need replacement?

(Note Mr. DiTullio and Mr. Levy left at this point in the agenda at 9 a.m.)

Mr. Katofsky noted he fielded a question about whether a whole house needs to meet the efficiency standard, or just the basement. The correct response is the whole house needs to meet a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) score of 44.

Mr. Benson said the joint 8/10 precinct meeting may have a number of opponents who will raise arguments against this measure, most of which have probably already been heard.

Mr. Miettinen noted that non-conforming lots are not distributed evenly throughout the town. Precinct 20 has many as does East Arlington. A good message is that one precinct may not have the same rights as another – again, an equity argument. He noted also that if CEFC members hear of individuals who will be supportive, neutral or

opposed we can code them in a tracking sheet so we have a sense of who needs follow-up.

Mr. Benson noted the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) put out a report on the Town Meeting web page which goes through each of the zoning-related articles and the ARB's position on each. He asked everyone to support the industrial zoning article which has strong climate elements in it, such as a solar roof requirement, permeable pavement, and mixed-use buildings. There will be significant opposition to the article.

Agenda Item 3: Implementation Priorities

Mr. Pruitt stated the CEFC has begun to form a working group to develop implementation priorities for the Net Zero Action Plan (NZAP). Mr. Miettinen, Mr. Katofsky, Mr. Breslow, Mr. Pruitt, and Ms. Brucie Moulton (a resident volunteer - not a CEFC member) offered to participate. Ms. Cooper also volunteered to participate. Mr. Pruitt listed a few ways the working group might prioritize measures: those labeled as highest priority in the NZAP should rise to the top of what we focus on for the year. Within each priority level ("High" vs. normal) the CEFC also numbered the measures in order of priority, so that should be a key consideration. Mr. Pruitt suggested that, if we see strategic opportunities (funding availability or the measure if favored by town boards or departments for example), this could also help determine the CEFC's priority work at any given time. Mr. Pruitt noted that we need to consider lead time – for example, the need to begin work on a measure well before Town Meeting when a proposed warrant article is expected to draw opposition. He also suggested that the working group should take into consideration resources required – staff time or funding. Any or all of these considerations could push the priority back or forward in time.

The CEFC discussed guidance for the NZAP implementation working group. Mr. Katofsky noted the minutes for the March meeting said we might have stimulus funding available, which should be considered early. Also, we should make sure we allocate enough time for anything that requires significant analysis or other kinds of lead time. Ms. Dein asked the extent to which the Net Zero Action Plan has been shared throughout the Town. She stated that decisions sometimes get made without a complete understanding of a more progressive way of doing things. To the extent the Action Plan states that Town department heads should be informed about measures, that action should be identified and the effort should be factored into the implementation plan. She also pointed to the need to identify impacted parties and to involve them in planning for the implementation of measures.

Mr. Miettinen said in general it would be beneficial to put ideas out there earlier and get feedback from people. For Warrant Article 38, some criticism has been helpful and more time would have allowed adjustments to be made before the measure was placed on the Town Meeting Warrant.

Mr. Amstutz stated (with regard to Mr. Katofsky's point about the need for analysis) that, in terms of resources needed if the measure requires a study or larger background to be gathered, the working group should identify consulting services as "resources" because Town staff won't always be able to do all the work. This is important when it comes to

funding. The working group should also drill down and identify what tasks/steps need to happen, for example, who do we need to talk to? What is the scale/where will infrastructure be sited? We should also get guidance from the Town Manager – for example the NZAP proposed policy about purchasing zero emissions vehicles. Does this policy come out of Town Manager's office? This is also important so that, when you have conversations with departments, it's clear there is support from the Town.

Mr. Benson stated the working group should figure out what impact or outcome there will be before prioritizing a measure. He recommended outreach to the ARB sooner rather than later. He said it would be great if there was an amendment to environmental design review that tied it to the Net Zero Action Plan so it's one of the criteria that is discussed as part of the permit process. He recommended thinking about three tracks – 1) what is the Town doing itself to implement the measure? 2) do you need funding for consultants/outreach to community? 3) do you want to tee up something for a zoning amendment or bylaw amendment?

Ms. Moulton said a priority should be to educate residents so they are knowledgeable when they talk to Town government. She recommended we start planning on-going outreach. She also suggested we look at what we need to do by 2025 and work backwards from there.

Mr. Amstutz noted residents need to be informed but it is also important that government is a good role model and it leads by example.

Mr. Pruitt asked when the working group should convene. The group agreed that before the next CEFC meeting (May 28th) and after the effort on Warrant Article 38 is considered by Town Meeting. Mr. Pruitt will send out a scheduling poll for the week of May 10th.

Submitted by Dave Levy and Coralie Cooper.